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Golden Gate Audubon Society

# THE GULL



## BIRDING AND TREKKING TO EVEREST

Picture the most spectacular mountain scenery in the world. Glorious peaks, reaching 21,000 feet, rise on all sides. Add masses of blooming primulas, andromedas, and rhododendrons amidst limpid spring weather. Then, observe some of the world's most intriguing birds: lammergeiers, blood pheasants, and the gorgeous Impeyan Pheasant, the national bird of Nepal. Put it all together and what have you got? Another George Peyton travel extravaganza, at once entertaining and informative.

Come experience George's trek to Everest Base Camp through his superb slide program and his witty, personalized commentary. Hiking last April from a small airstrip on the edge of a 9200 foot cliff to the base of Mt. Everest at over 18,000 feet, George saw and marveled at such unique birds as the Tibetan snowcock, the ibisbill, and the Kalij pheasant. In addition, he visited the famous Thangboche Monastery in the Sherpa region and witnessed market day at Namche Bazaar.

George promises us a lively, stimulating program for our November 13 meeting, to be held at 7:30 at Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, in Berkeley.

Since the Christmas Counts will supercede our regular monthly meeting, we look forward to seeing you then and next on January 8 in San Francisco.

—TOM WHITE

## CHRISTMAS COUNTS ARE COMING!

The time has almost come to decide to help with the GGAS Christmas Bird Counts. In fact, the time has come. If you have not participated and would like to be a part of the fun this year, call the office, 843-2222, or send in a post card. If you were a counter last year, you can expect to receive a letter with full details in late November. The Oakland Count is set for Sunday, Dec. 21 and the San Francisco Count will be Monday, Dec. 29. As usual, the day ends with a catered hot meal and countdown at Trinity Methodist Church, 2320 Dana, Berkeley, and at the Hall of Flowers (County Fair Bldg.) in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. For more, see pages 136 and 137.

## FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

**Sunday, November 2—Tennessee Valley.** See October *Gull*.

**Saturday, November 8—Birds of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate near Ninth Ave. and Lincoln Way. We will look for birds in the various habitats of the arboretum. Leader: Alan Ridley (566-3241).

**Wednesday, November 12—Mini trip to Aquatic Park, Berkeley and other nearby shoreline areas.** Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the northwest corner of Spenger's parking lot to carpool. We should see returning shorebirds and migratory ducks. Lunch optional; rain cancels trip. Leaders: Delpha deTimofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Saturday, November 15—Beginners' Field Trip to Chain of Lakes, Golden Gate Park.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the parking lot between South and Middle Lakes near 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way. We will identify the common water and land birds of this area. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. The trip will end before lunch. Leader: Woody Kuehn (239-7914).

**Sunday, November 16—Palo Alto Baylands.** Take Highway 101 south to Palo Alto, exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and the Baylands Refuge until you reach the duck pond on the left just beyond the Palo Alto Airport. Meet here at 8:30 a.m. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Leader: Bob Hirt (408/446-4478). (✓)

**Saturday/Sunday, November 22/23—Gray Lodge and Sacramento Wildlife Refuges.** For this two day trip, meet on **Saturday** at 9 a.m. in parking lot #14 at Gray Lodge. Approach via Hwy. 99 and follow the signs out of Live Oak or Gridley. There is a state park campground in Colusa. For those wishing to stay in a motel, the Blue Gum in Willows (916-934-5401) is suggested. From the Bay Area drive east on I-80 to I-505 in Vacaville, take I-505 to I-5 and drive north to Willows for lodging or turn off sooner for the refuges. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for the valley in November. Allow two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. Heavy rain cancels trip. Leaders: Peter and Dolores White (229-1714). (✓)

**Thursday, November 27—Twelfth Annual Thanksgiving outing to Point Reyes National Seashore.** We hope to see all alumni of previous trips and to welcome newcomers. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, Section H, or at 10 a.m. at the Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters at Olema. We will have a leisurely day of birding and hiking. We generally see an excellent variety of waterfowl, shorebirds and landbirds. The day will end with the Thanksgiving dinner (about \$9+) at Jerry's Farmhouse (no reservations are needed) in the town of Olema. Bring a light lunch, scope and clothes for cool and windy weather. Leader: Barry Spitz (461-1930 days or 454-2769 between 6 and 9 p.m.). (✓)

**Saturday, December 6—Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas.** Meet at

**9 a.m.** in Monterey at the foot of the Coast Guard Pier. We will bird in this area and drive north stopping at various spots including Moss Landing. Bring a scope if you have one. Leader: Don Starks (408-371-9720). (✓)

**Sunday, December 7—Tomalas Bay State Park.** Meet at the Heart's Desire Beach parking lot at **9 a.m.** From Inverness, continue on Sir Frances Drake Blvd. to the Pierce Point turnoff. Follow the signs to Tomalas Bay State Park. There is a \$2 entrance fee. We will look for shorebirds and landbirds. After lunch, we may look for longspurs or interesting birds at Point Reyes. Leader: George Hugenberg (435-6873). (✓)

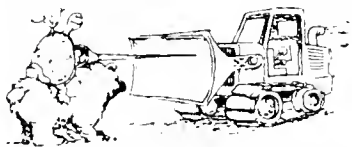
#### Notes from the Field Trips Committee:

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 236-7022 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222.)

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

KEEP UP THE CRUSADE!



### PICK UP YOUR LANCE

and stay with those crusading to protect wildlife and the environment. *Audubon Action* (NAS news-journal) has been replaced by our new national newsletter, the *Audubon Activist*, to give you all the information you need to slay dragons. Sign up for the activist corps today. Send six dollars, for one year, to the *Audubon Activist*, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

## SEPTEMBER OBSERVATIONS

### through September 23

Several days of sun during the second week of September interrupted a seemingly endless pattern of fog. These were followed by more fog, clouds, rain and cool weather through the period. August was touted as the foggiest in 35 years. This weather pattern provided good numbers of vagrants. SE Farallon Island reported landbird waves September 2-4, 7, and 12 (all SE Farallon Island information thanks to PRBO). The later two dates correspond well with mainland reports, with a third small fallout of vagrants and birders on the mainland September 21.

#### Tubenoses

Two Flesh-footed Shearwaters were found on a Monterey Pelagic trip Sept. 20 (SJ). A light phase **Wedge-tailed Shearwater** was seen and well photographed on a pelagic trip about 5 miles west of Pt. Pinos, Monterey Co. Aug. 31 (RS). A warm-water species, this bird represents the first North American record. Buller's Shearwaters made a good showing throughout the period, with numbers increasing from several Aug. 24 on a Farallones pelagic trip (MLE) to 1500 out of Monterey Sept. 20 (SJ). Up to 60,000 Sooty Shearwaters were seen from shore Aug. 24 (DLSu). Five Short-tailed Shearwaters were spotted: one on a Farallones pelagic trip Aug. 24 (MLE), one out of Monterey Aug. 31 (RS, et al.), and three in the Gulf of Farallones Sept. 14 (TJ). Only two reports of Black-vented Shearwater were received: two on a Monterey pelagic trip Sept. 12 (SJ), and 15 seen from shore at Santa Cruz Sept. 16 (DLSu). The first concentration of Storm-Petrels was found Sept. 1 on a Monterey pelagic trip:



about 1000 birds—75% Ashy, 25% Black Storm-Petrels (JM, et al.). Up to 3000 were seen Sept. 20 and were estimated to be 75% Black, 25% Ashy (SJ). A Wilson's Storm-Petrel was viewed on a Monterey pelagic trip Aug. 31 (RS, et al.). Two Leach's Storm-Petrels showed up on a pelagic trip out of Monterey Sept. 12 (SJ), and another was seen off of Cordell Banks Sept. 14 (SJ).

### **Hérons through Shorebirds**

An immature Little Blue Heron was found at Palo Alto Baylands Refuge Sept. 17 (TAC), and seen again the next day in the flood control area (JWa, *fide* DLSu). A single Broad-winged Hawk was at the Marin Headlands Sept. 10 (HB).

A **Eurasian Dotterel**, found by two observant birders on the Spaletta Plateau Sept. 6 (DAH, DDK), obligingly stayed around through Sept. 9 (JSL, LJP, mob). This bird represents a second California record, the first on the mainland. (The other was on SE Farallon Island in Sept., 1974.) An immature American Black Oystercatcher flew over a Palo Alto marsh Aug. 20, providing a second county record for Santa Clara (DLSu). Solitary Solitary Sandpipers were noted from Yolo to Monterey Counties: Cache Creek Settling Basin Sept. 12 (WEH), Bolinas Lagoon Aug. 21 (WG, AG), Pajaro River at Murphy's Crossing Aug. 23 (DLSu), Laguna Beach, Santa Cruz Co. Sept. 17 (DLSu), and Salinas Sewage Ponds Aug. 23, 28-30 (PJM, BS, RS). Sightings of Semipalmated Sandpipers tapered off from last month, with one being seen at Bolinas Lagoon Aug. 21 (WG, AG), one at Moonglow Dairy, Monterey Co. Sept. 20 (MCM), and one at Salinas Sewage Ponds Sept. 21 (*fide* DR). About 70 Baird's Sandpipers and about 44 Pectoral Sandpipers were

seen throughout the period in coastal counties from Mendocino to Monterey and in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties (mob). A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was observed at Salinas Sewage Ponds Sept. 11, 14, 18 (BHG, LJP, *fide* DR); another was seen at the Moonglow Dairy Sept. 21 (GMCC). An adult **Curlew Sandpiper** was seen briefly Sept. 6 (MP) but evaded subsequent observers. Buff-breasted Sandpipers were located in Monterey Co.: two at the Salinas Sewage Ponds Aug. 28-Sept. 1 (PJM), and one at Asilomar Beach Sept. 6-8 (DR). A Ruff was found at the Laguna Beach Pond Aug. 30 and continued to be seen through Sept. 5 (DLSu, PJM). Another Ruff visited the Salinas Sewage Ponds Aug. 31-Sept. 8 (MJL, *fide* JML, DLSu). A third individual showed up at the Salinas River Mouth Sept. 5 (PJM), and a fourth Ruff was discovered at the Carmel River Mouth Sept. 14 (ChW, CIW), and seen again Sept. 18 (RS).

### **Jaegers through Puffins**

Two adult Pomerine and twenty Parasitic Jaegers were seen from New Brighton State Beach Aug. 24 (DLSu), and a Parasitic Jaeger was found at the Sunnyvale Sewage Ponds Sept. 9 (PLN). Long-tailed Jaegers were reported on most pelagic trips, with 12 seen out of Monterey Sept. 12 (SJ). South Polar Skuas were seen on numerous pelagic trips out of Monterey throughout the period with a high count of four Sept. 7 (SJ). A juvenal Franklin's Gull was at the Salinas Sewage Ponds Aug. 28 (PJM). An adult Sabine's Gull at Davis Sewage Ponds Sept. 12 (mob) was a good bird inland. Meanwhile, most pelagic trips throughout the period saw Sabine's Gulls, with 52 being seen out of Monterey on Sept. 11 (SJ). A high count for Arctic Terns was 700 in the Cordell Banks area

Sept. 14 (SJ), and PRBO reported high numbers Aug. 31-Sept. 18, with 400 Sept. 15. In Santa Clara Co. 48 Least Terns rested at Crittendon Marsh Aug. 24 before departing southward, with 22 still present Sept. 7 (DLSu).

Two Xantus'/Craveri's type Murrelets were seen on several Monterey pelagic trips: two Sept. 11, six Sept. 18, and two Sept. 20. Two Xantus' and two Craveri's were identified Sept. 12. Xantus' Murrelets were also seen on a Cordell Banks trip Sept. 14 (all SJ). Considered more common in warm water years, small numbers of Craveri's Murrelets occurred on four other pelagic trips during the period (SJ, JM, et al.). A Cassin's Auklet at Shoreline Lake near Mt. View Sept. 9 (DLSu) must have surprised the observer.

### Western Migrants and Eastern Vagrants

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo appeared on SE Farallon Sept. 3. A Lesser Nighthawk reached Mountain View Sept. 15 (DLSu). A Black-chinned Hummingbird stayed on SE Farallon Island Sept. 2-4, a second island record. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was banded on SE Farallon and stayed Sept. 3-5, for a third island and third California record. Two Least Flycatchers made their appearance on SE Farallon Island Sept. 12, and another was at the Point Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 19-20 (RS). Unusual was a Western Kingbird at the Oakland Airport Sept. 1 (LRF). An Eastern Kingbird was at Drake's Beach on Dotterel Day, Sept. 7 (mob). A Clark's Nutcracker wandered to the Mendocino coast just south of Anchor Bay Aug. 30 and stayed to be photographed through Sept. 7 (ACH, PaH, BPe). A Mountain Bluebird was at the RCA Station Sept. 21 (LJP). The SE Farallon Island had two Philadelphia Vireos, Sept. 12-15, and Sept. 19-21.

A Red-eyed Vireo was found dead on the deck of an Oakland residence Aug. 31 (LDa). Three other more lively birds were discovered as follows: SE Farallon Sept 6-8; Fish Docks Sept 8 (DLSu, MLa, et al.); Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Sept. 9 (PJM).

### Vagrant Warblers

The following table of warblers lists 102 individuals of 18 vagrant species. These figures are lower than the bonus years of 1979-1981, but represent the best year since then. The table is presented chronologically within species, except for geographical lumping where several of the same species occur at the same site.

Tennessee Warbler (total 9)			
3 SE Farallon	Sept. 7-13		PRBO
1 Pt. Reyes-Giacomini Ravine	Sept. 7		JML
2 Fish Docks	Sept. 8-9		DLSu;
	Sept. 12-14		JML, DPM, BKe
1 Golden Gate Park	Sept. 16		DPM
1 Pt. Reyes-Nunes	Sept. 20		DAH, DDK
1 Big Sur	Sept. 20		<i>fide</i> DR
Virginia's Warbler (total 1)			
1 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 21		<i>fide</i> DR
Northern Parula (total 3)			
1 Reichmuth Park, Sacramento	Aug. 26-Sept. 2		JML, TDM
	Sept. 6		
1 Pt. Reyes-Nunes	Sept. 12		JML, DDK
1 SE Farallon	Sept. 14		PRBO
Chestnut-sided Warbler (total 7)			
5 SE Farallon	Sept. 3-7		PRBO
(with 5 present on 9/7)			
1 Neary's Lagoon	Sept. 6		DLSu
1 Pacific Grove	Sept. 15		DR
Magnolia Warbler (total 10)			
5 SE Farallon	Aug. 31-Sept. 8		PRBO
1 Palomarin	Sept. 2		<i>fide</i> RS
1 Drake's Beach	Sept. 7		JGE
1 Giacomini Ravine	Sept. 7		JML
1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 12		DW, JML
1 Modesto Pump Station	Sept. 13		HMR
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 1)			
1 SE Farallon	Sept. 21		PRBO
Blackburnian Warbler (total 1)			
1 SE Farallon	Sept. 4-7		PRBO

## Prairie Warbler (total 2)

1 Pt. Reyes-New Willows	Sept. 9	JSL
1 SE Farallon	Sept. 20-21	PRBO

## Blackpoll Warbler (total 24)

17 SE Farallon	Sept. 4-20	PRBO
2 Pt. Reyes-Nunes	Sept. 6; 10-12	MLR, JML
1 Pt. Reyes Mendoza	Sept. 6	MLR
1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 12	BR
1 Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	Sept. 12-13	BR, DPM, LJP
2 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 13	DAH

## Black-and-white Warbler (total 2)

1 SE Farallon	Sept. 12	PRBO
1 Drake's Beach	Sept. 12	JML

## American Redstart (total 20)

1 Reichmuth Park, Sacramento	Sept. 3-4	TDM
3 SE Farallon	Sept. 6-12	PRBO
3 Pt. Reyes-Nunes	Sept. 6-8(2); 20	MLR, DLSu;
1 Pt. Reyes Mendoza	Sept. 6-7	MLR, JML
1 Muddy Hollow	Sept. 6	MLR
2 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 7; 12-13	MLR; DDK, DPM, DSi, SP
3 Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	Sept. 12; 21 (2)	JML; AG
1 Lincoln Park	Sept. 13-14	ASH
1 Pilarcitos Creek	Sept. 13	RTh
1 Middle Lake	Sept. 14-16	ASH, DPM
1 Fitzgerald Marine	Sept. 20	JEG
1 Davenport Pier	Sept. 20	DLSu
1 Marin Headlands	Sept. 22	CLF

## Prothonotary Warbler (total 2)

1 Pacific Grove	Sept. 13-20	DR, MCM
1 Pt. Reyes-Nunes	Sept. 18-21	SC, RS, et al.

## Ovenbird (total 5)

3 SE Farallon	Sept. 7-12	PRBO
2 Pt. Reyes-New Willows	Sept. 13; 20	MFe; DSi

## Northern Waterthrush (total 6)

2 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 5-7; 21	<i>fide</i> RAE; <i>fide</i> DR
1 Fitzgerald Marine	Sept. 6-9	MDa, PJM
1 UC Davis Campus (dead)	Sept. 12	ECB
1 Neary's Lagoon	Sept. 13	Phr
1 New Brighton Beach	Sept. 16	DLSu

## Connecticut Warbler (total 1)

1 SE Farallon	Sept. 12	PRBO
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## Mourning Warbler (total 5)

4 SE Farallon	Sept. 3-12	PRBO
1 Drake's Beach	Sept. 10	KH

## Hooded Warbler (total 1)

1 Carmel Mission area	Sept. 18	RS
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## Canada Warbler (total 2-3?)

1 Reichmuth Park, Sacramento	Aug. 23-26 Sept. 1	JML, EG
1 SE Farallon	Sept. 7-8	PRBO

## Other Vagrant Landbirds

Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks made the trip to SE Farallon Island Sept. 10 and 19. Another was found at the Fish Docks Sept. 19 (RS). A Blue Grosbeak was at SE Farallon Island Sept. 10, and one visited Road Forks Pool, Pt. Reyes Sept. 7-9 (LKy, et al.). SE Farallon Island had two Indigo Buntings Sept. 2-8, and one was found in the Matadero Creek Riparian Area Sept. 11 (PLN). A **Dickcissel** stayed at SE Farallon Island Sept. 24-27, following hot on the dactyls of last month's mainland bird.

One Green-tailed Towhee was at SE Farallon Island Sept. 10. An American Tree Sparrow lingered at Mendoza Schoolhouse Sept. 7-11 (JML, WC, et al.). Clay-colored Sparrows appeared at four locations this fall: four at SE Farallon Island Aug. 24-Sept. 20; one at Road Forks Pool Sept. 10 (SP), which may have been the same bird seen at Nunes Sept. 11-12 (EG, JML), and one at Pilarcitos Creek Mouth Sept. 14 (PhR). Four Brewer's Sparrows strayed to the coast, four at SE Farallon Aug. 24-Sept. 12, and one at the Fish Docks Sept. 2 (*fide* RS). A juvenal plumaged **Le Conte's Sparrow** at SE Farallon Island Sept. 11-12 represents the Island's second record. Bobolinks appeared in surprising numbers with seven at SE Farallon Sept. 1-20, two at the Mendoza Schoolhouse Sept. 7 (RAE, et al.), one at Mt. View Forebay Sept. 9 (DLSu), and up to seven at Neary's Lagoon Sept. 5-11 (PJM, DLSu). An Orchard Oriole appeared at Lodi Lake Wilderness area Sept. 1 (DY), and another was at Pierce Ranch, Pt. Reyes Sept. 21 (DAH, DDK).

## Observers

Edward C. Beedy, Herb Brandt, Scott Carey, Ted A. Chandik, Maryann Danielson (MDa), Laura Davis (LDa), Richard A. Erickson, Jules G. Evans,

Michael L. Ezekiel, Carter L. Faust, Leora R. Feeney, Marc Fenner (MFe), Shawneen Finnegan, Jo Ellen Gardiner, Bruce H. Gerow, Al Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Philip E. Gordon, Edward Greaves, Keith Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Allan C. Hogle, Pati Hogle (PaH), David A. Holway, Alan S. Hopkins, George Hugenberg, Richard Jeffers, Tom Johnson, Durrell D. Kapan, Bill Keener (BKe), Linda Krypta, Jeri M. Langham, Michael Larkin (MLa), Mike J. Lippsmeyer, John S. Luther, Tim D. Manolis, Guy McCaskie, Peter J. Metropulos, Mark C. Miller, Joseph Morlan, Daniel P. Murphy, Paul L. Noble, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Bill Perry (BP), Steve Perry, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon Report thanks to Peter Pyle), Lina J. Prairie, Harold M. Reeve, Bob Richmond, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Philip Rostron (PhR), Barry Saupe, Debra L. Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, Dianne Sierra, Larry Silver (LSi), Rich Stallcup, David L. Suddjian, Ron Thorn (RTh), Dorothy Tobkin, John Walton (JWa), Janet Wessel, Katherine Wilson, David Wimpfheimer, Chrisine Wolf (ChW), Claire Wolf (CIW), David Yee.

Please report observations to Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 528-0288.

—HELEN A. GREEN

Observations Editor  
2001 Yolo Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94707

## THE SANDERLING PROJECT

Another report from the project staff lists results of their spring censusing efforts and announced their first fall count which was Oct. 18-19. Numbers were down from the last census, perhaps because the spring count was earlier this

year.

A total of 34 color-marked birds were sighted in April and May: 6 in Washington, 26 in Northern Oregon and 2 in central Oregon. All but two were banded in May '84 or '85 at Clatsop Spit. Two were yellow-flagged birds banded in Peru. In March '86 a bird banded at Clatsop Spit in '84 was resighted on the Galapagos Is. It had been sighted at Oregon Dunes during the south-bound migration in '84. first sighting of a Peruvian-marked Western Sandpiper in North America occurred at Nehalem Bay, Oregon this summer.

Project staff express thanks for reporting received, and urges continued efforts by birders to report color coded Sanderlings seen as they walk California beaches.

## THE SHOREBIRD ORGANIZATION

Formation of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network was announced by the World Wildlife Fund—US and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Peru, Canada and numerous US State agencies have made commitments to put important sites within the system. The headquarters of the Network is the Academy of Natural Sciences, 19th and The Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103. For further information write Peter Myers at that address. Here is a new conservation organization that began with banded Sanderlings!

## AUDUBON CALENDARS

*While they last—  
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GGAS Office \$6.75*

## CONSERVATION NOTES

### GGAS vs Port of Oakland

GGAS is currently involved in a law suit with the Port of Oakland regarding the fill and destruction of 180 acres of wetland habitat for an air freight development. Last spring the Army Corps of Engineer's permit for the project met with controversy, and EPA officials expressed objection. It was disappointing to conservation groups when the EPA dropped their opposition in late July.

Environmentalists investigated legal action and after several weeks of study, GGAS decided to act based on violation to the California Environmental Quality Act. On August 21, 1986 we filed a complaint with a group called CALM (Citizens for Alameda County's Last Marshes) resulting in a restraining order on the project. Following this lead, the State of California joined the suit on September 10. Save S.F. Bay Association also tried to join the suit, but were denied because it was determined they had no new cause.

Currently, we are waiting for the court decision, due on October 21. Attorneys are also looking at mitigation sites appropriate for this project, and there may be settlement out of court.

Though it is felt that there is violation to Army Corps Section 404 regulations, we have not as yet pursued this legal action.

Wetland habitat is the victim of destruction and controversy. The current law suit is a courageous effort to maintain important wildlife habitat using the laws designed to protect these decreasing resources. GGAS is not opposing the project, but does want appropriate local mitigation for wetland losses. It is also important to assure that current laws are not weakened by bureaucracy, politics

and influence.

We are the leaders in an important urban wildlife protection effort, one which will no doubt be watched carefully by many people. The wildlife is primarily migratory, an international resource, and a major responsibility. Law suits are not what we enjoy most, but the need was apparent, and we are committed.

Donations at this time would be very much appreciated. They will offset legal costs and show support for this legal action. It will also give members an unequalled opportunity to participate in urban habitat protection. Please label your donations "legal action fund."

—LEORA FEENEY

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## LEAST TERN NEWS

Generally, it has been a good nesting season for the California Least Terns (CLTs), a minimum of 55 pairs, in the Bay Area.

The Metropolitan Oakland International Airport hosted 35 nests initiated by an estimated 29-34 pairs, the highest numbers since 1983. Unfortunately, only 10-11 chicks fledged successfully due to heavy predation in June, apparently by Northern Harriers. While reproductive success was poor there, it was apparent that many of the pairs renested at NAS, Alameda, where reproductive success was good-excellent throughout the season.

At NAS an estimated 37-49 pairs initiated 55 nests. The 68-88 chicks fledged there represented the most young fledged in a year at NAS since the over 100 fledged in 1981; the second to the most fledged in at least 11 years.

The PG&E Power Plant in West Pittsburg hosted only one pair of California Least Terns this year but their two chicks both fledged successfully.

Leora Feeney and I would like to



thank those of you who took heed of our plea in the April *GULL* and took special care to look for CLTs this year. We'll need your help again next year, as will be discussed in a future article.

—LAURA COLLINS

## THE DOTS . . . .

The inclusion of the table from *The Trimtab Factor* (Harold Willens, Wm. Morrow, N.Y. 1984) in the July-August issue of *The GULL* attracted considerable response. One reader said that she had reproduced it and was mailing a copy once a week to the White House. Another, off to study in Britain, says he plans to use the approach in connection with his work in a business administration program. It even led me to read the book. As a result, I can recommend it highly. One quotation:

"Early in my business career, I was given a guideline that has served me well in my personal enterprises and as a member of various corporate boards: **Never bet the whole company.** If we had two identical worlds, perhaps gambling with the survival of one might be considered an affordable risk. But since we have only one, is it a good business risk to allow mortal (and therefore possibly mistaken) bureaucrats to bet our whole company?"

—EDITOR



## BACK YARD BIRDER

We are fortunate to have the Point Reyes Bird Observatory nearby. Located in Marin County, it is a fascinating place to visit. Their chief purpose is bird banding.

Banding is a valuable tool to our further knowledge and understanding of bird species. Most of our knowledge regarding migration has been collected in this century thanks to banding information. By placing a numbered metal or plastic band on a bird's leg or wing, we can keep track of an individual bird during its lifetime. If, e.g., a nestling Barn Owl is banded in 1986 and is found dead in 2006, we have proved that Barn Owls live *at least* 20 years. Or, if a Manx Shearwater is banded in Boston and is re-trapped in its breeding hole upon arrival in England, we get a clue as to its flight-speed, its navigational skills and its homing instincts. Warblers banded in Canada, re-trapped in New England and finally found dead in South America give us clues as to a particular species' migration route. All this is not only interesting, but is crucial to the formulation of policies governing hunting, pest control and endangered species.

There are stringent federal and local government prerequisites to the granting of permission to band birds. To maintain uniformity, there are official reporting forms and procedures.

The typical light metal band varies in size to accommodate different sized species. It is made so that the bird is not encumbered or uncomfortable. Each band is inscribed with a number and an address where reports are to be sent. When field recognition is of chief importance, colored plastic markers are placed on the leg, wing, bill, or around the neck. This would be the case if studying a resident species so that

individuals would have different colored bands.

Mist nets are the most widely-used method of capturing birds for banding. The open mesh is made of fine, strong black silk or nylon. 30' to 40' lengths of net are strung loosely in tiers of five. A long pocket is formed along the lower edge of each tier. Against the background of vegetation the nets are nearly invisible. When a bird blunders into the net, it falls into the pouch areas and becomes entangled. Since each species has its distinct level of flight, each tier contains different species. It may alarm you to see helpless little bodies hanging in the nets, some of them upside down. But, as if sensing that struggle would be futile and energy-consuming, the birds seem to relax and await the collector, who carefully untangles his catch. There is possibly some trauma, but the birds seem to recover quickly. The bander places each bird in a small cotton duffle bag to be carried back to the lab where it is measured, weighed, identified as to species, sex, and age, and where it is banded. Then its band number is recorded. Other information may be collected, such as definitive characteristics that have not been previously noted, made possible by such close examination. We are so seldom so close to a bird and often identification is not as easy as one might expect; i.e., being unable to judge a bird's posture and behavior may cause the bird-in-the-hand to be a puzzlement.

It would be easy to jump to all sorts of conclusions when combining banding information. But only a small percentage of bird life can be banded and many banded birds are never recovered (out of the 30 to 40 million birds banded in North America to date, only 10% have been recovered). Have you ever seen or recovered a banded bird? Also, bird

banders are not evenly distributed throughout the world. What about the native in South America who finds a bird and cannot read its band, and decides that the shiny metal would make a fine addition to his costume? It is only when we study the accumulation of data of a given species in a given place at a given time, that trends can be noted and theories proposed. The use of computers has been a big advancement for collating, comparing and analyzing information.

Bravo, you dedicated bird-banders! Thanks for taking the time to check patiently the mist nets every 10 to 20 minutes and then record information for the experts as well as us back yard birders. After they are gently released, the birds become living laboratories. And if any of you readers finds a banded bird, let me know.

—MEG PAULETICH

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## BIKE-A-THONING FOR MONO

**August 25-30, 1986**

The annual Mono Lake Bike-a-thon, to raise money and support for ongoing legal battles, was joined by two GGAS members this year, Barbara Rivenes, our Office Manager, and me, old Obs. Ed. The ride began at the Department of Water and Power in Los Angeles and ended at the shores of Mono Lake 350 miles away. Each rider carries a vial of water from LADWP to Mono Lake as a symbolic gesture of commitment to maintaining critical water levels for the Lake. The Lake has long been a special conservation issue for this chapter, and the GGAS Board voted to support us by pledging \$1.00 per mile. This was a big boost to our fund raising, and we then became shameless beggars, raising over \$2000 jointly. Barbara's husband, Don,

was also a major contributor. He drove one of the sag wagons from LA to Mono.

The adventure, in retrospect, was not as difficult as it might sound. Although we worked hard out in the sun getting our bikes and our bodies up those grades, we had a lot of support. There were 65 riders and 5-6 sag wagons carrying our gear. The sag wagons were stationed every 15 miles or so along the way, with sag drivers greeting us, sometimes with water sprayed on us, often with oranges, bananas, grapes, melons, and mostly, with plenty of water to drink.

After spending Sunday night before the ride on the floor of a church in Santa Monica, we were more than anxious to get off the floor and onto our bikes. At LADWP the press conference, pictures, and hoopla took place while we rookies waited nervously in the increasing heat. Finally, we were off, riding in a pack to begin with, but soon spreading out to follow required motor vehicle rules. We followed a well-planned route out of Los Angeles, through the San Gabriel Mts., with only modest amounts of smog to clog our lungs. Most of us made it to Palmdale by about 5:30 p.m., tired but not dead yet.

Another night on top of the sleeping bag, but this time on the ground. Mexican food, crunchy granola in the morning, and we were ready (?) for Day Two, an 85-mile ride to Inyokern. This day didn't seem much harder than the day before. Tail winds out of Mojave helped a bit and the beauty of Red Rock kept us going through a long hot canyon—and those sag wagons were a welcome sight when our water bottles got low. Staying in Inyokern was another matter. The campspot was already occupied with about 200,000 small ants who figured it was their turf.

On Day Three we came to Highway

395, with the unbelievable Sierra to the west and range after range on the east—the Cosos, Inyos, and eventually the Whites. This was also the day it clouded up. Thunder livened things up, lightning struck near the sides of the road, and we biked through rain after lunch. Trucks whizzed by, sloshing water all over us, though it was never too cold and clearing skies kept us going. We camped near Lone Pine, at Lake Diaz (just right for swimming) and slept beneath Mt. Whitney that night.

Day Four was one of the easiest days, biking beside the Sierra from Lone Pine to Bishop on fairly level terrain. We were getting stronger, feeling like “real” bikers by this time, and the weather was mostly clear and mild. This is the day Tony Rossman, attorney for the Mono Lake Committee, began his 100 mile run—carrying water from Owens Valley to Mono Lake—to focus attention on Mono Lake's plight and to gain sponsors from politicians throughout the State. In Bishop we were treated to dinner by the St. Timothy's Episcopal Church parish and allowed to sleep on the church lawn. A switch to Italian food this night (carbos for Sherwin Grade the next day) and plenty of wine to accompany it (definitely not for Sherwin Grade).

Day Five included our steepest grade, the most beautiful scenery, and unbelievable headwinds. Veteran riders of this trek had been talking about Sherwin Grade since Sunday night—Old Sherwin vs. New, traffic vs. beauty. As it turned out we didn't have a choice. Caltrans was working on New Sherwin. It was, indeed, steep going, but it proved to be tame in comparison to the headwinds we encountered in Long Valley. Mammoth was our destination for the night. There we all ate dinner at a pizza parlor which had been reserved for us.



Awards, roasts and toasts took place on this last night of our pilgrimage. Tony joined us, looking fit and ready for the last portion of his run.

Day Six! What we had all been biking for. The last part of the journey followed the Mammoth Scenic Loop back to Highway 395, to the top of Deadman Summit (elev. 8030), and the final last glorious downhill to Mono Lake. The day was beautiful as only days can be in late August in the Mono Basin, and there were many friends and bucket walkers there to greet us. The water we carried from Los Angeles, the water the bucket walkers carried from above the diversion dam on Lee Vining Creek, and the water Tony carried 100 miles from the Owens Valley was all returned to Mono Lake at once, an emotional finish to our week-long endeavors.

WATER is really what the trip was all about. The fight to save Mono Lake is one small part of the efforts to distribute fairly the water of our state. We feel, along with the Mono Lake Committee, that conservation and compromise must be the solution. The Los Angeles DWP cannot simply 'take' without considering the needs of others (residents of both Inyo and Mono Counties), and without taking into account the potential permanent destruction of natural wonder, uniquely beautiful Mono Lake, a life support system to millions of migratory and nesting birds.

In long, it was a thoroughly enriching experience and we encourage more GGAS participants for next year. Have slides, will travel!

—HELEN GREEN  
& BARBARA RIVENES

## GGAS CHRISTMAS OAKLAND

This annual birding effort will take place on Sunday, Dec. 21. The 15-mile diameter count circle, centered in Oakland, stretches from Moraga to Yerba Buena Island and north to Albany. Habitats range from open bay to redwood forest. This productive area is divided into smaller territories, each assigned to a group of counters who look for and count as many birds of as many species as they can find. Ambitious birders are out before dawn counting owls too. Those who have active feeders inside the circle can help by keeping a feeder tally on count day.

The count does need your help. The area includes approximately 177 square miles to be covered and never enough observers. So please consider joining us on the 21st. Even if you are new at this, there will be the help of an experienced leader. The day's adventure is rewarding, and the countdown dinner and tally is fun.

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## SAN LUIS OBISPO SYMPOSIUM

Co-sponsored by the Bureau of Land Management, US Dept. of the Interior, and California Polytechnic State University at the University Nov. 12-14, 1986, there will be a meeting on *Multiple-use Management of California's Hardwood Resources*. Those interested should write or phone Julie Oxford at Cal Poly for information: (805) 546-2751, or NRM Dept., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.



## BIRD COUNTS SAN FRANCISCO

The San Francisco Christmas Bird Count will be held on Monday, December 29. This fourth "City Count" promises to be as exciting as the others. As usual, we will have teams covering the Peninsula north of San Bruno Ave. Participants who can't get free from work can be assigned to cover small parks and open spaces near their worksites. This allows for early morning and midday coverage of parks in areas such as downtown San Francisco.

We still have a number of problems with the count. We desperately need the services of a boat to cover the Bay from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Airport. We continue to need a boat to cover the Ocean portions of the count circles as well. Feeder stations are grossly under-reported on this count. We know from birdseed sales there are quite a few feeders in the count circle. It is important that we develop this bird count resources. Last year we were short one area leader and face the possibility of losing others this year. Prospective leaders should phone one of the compilers.

New for this year's count will be the first **San Francisco Christmas Bird**

**Count T-Shirt.** Designed (see below) by Alan Hopkins, it will help offset the cost of the count. An order form will accompany the CBC letters and will appear in the December *GULL*.

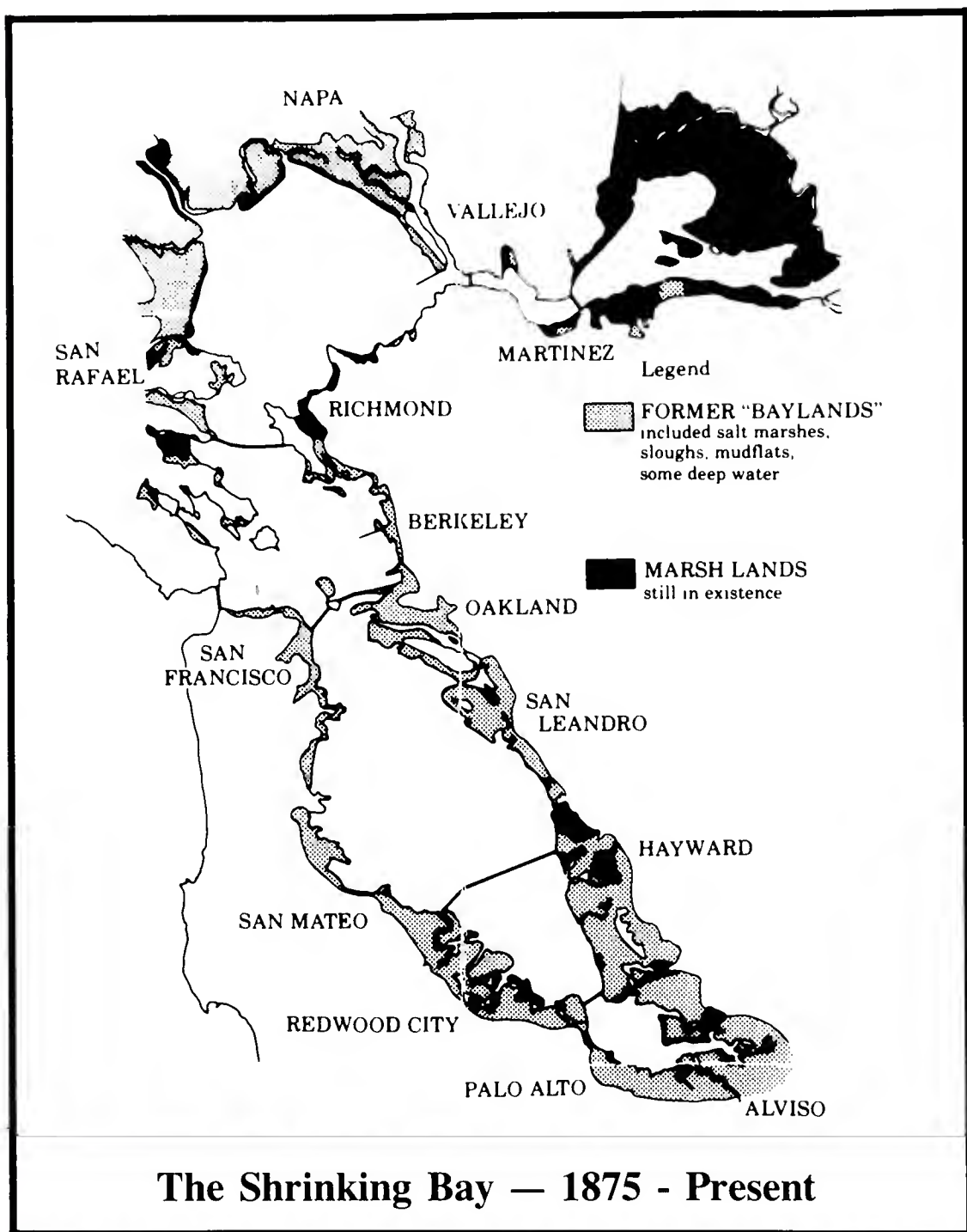
CBC letters will be mailed in late November. If you don't receive your letter please phone one of the compilers early in December. If you can help with a boat please let us know immediately. We hope to see you at the countdown dinner. Details in *The GULL* for December. COMPILERS: Dan Murphy (564-0074) and Alan Hopkins (664-0983).

## CALIFORNIA RAPTORS AT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM

Until Jan. 4th the Oakland Museum is showing an exhibit of photographs by John Hendrickson and others of hawks and owls.

The text of the exhibit stresses raptor's physical designs for survival, their hunting habits, nest building and parenting. A major theme is the ecology of predation—how raptors help balance the environment, directly affecting the quality of human life. Museum hours are Wednesday through Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 12-5. It is at 10th and Oak Streets.





**PROTECTING THE BAY IS  
EVERYBODY'S JOB!**

*Courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

## NEWS FROM THE RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch—Shoreline Highway  
Stinson Beach, CA. (415) 383-1644

Under Joint Sponsorship of Golden Gate,  
Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies  
Flora MacIise, Chair

A luncheon was held in October to honor Alice Kent, who for over 12 years gave extensively of her time and talent to the ranch as well as supporting it financially. The event was attended by close friends and associates from ACR.

Her contributions during the early years of the preserve can hardly be overstated. At a time when Bolinas Lagoon was in danger of extensive development she donated the 12 and a half acres of Kent Island above high tide which was key to thwarting plans for a marina.

The ranch's well known posters of the Great Heron and Great Blue Egret are Mrs. Kent's gift. She underwrote the cost of the three color separation plates and other production expenses for a portfolio of eight ACR birds from photographs by Clerin Zumwalt.

She was also instrumental in raising funds for the three tiered drinking fountain honoring the work of Stan Picher in Picher Canyon and planning trails

and the picnic area.

Give your family a pre-holiday gift, a relaxing family weekend at the Bolinas Preserve on December 6 and 7. Make some holiday crafts, take a hike and view the duck-filled lagoon in winter as well as sharing dinner and stories around the potbellied stove with Anne Monk and Ray Peterson.

For more information or to sign up call ACR at (415) 383-1644.

Don't forget the Saturday Community Hikes at Bouverie Audubon Preserve on November 22 and December 27 at 9:30 a.m. You must call for reservations no later than Wednesday prior to each hike (707) 938-4554.

## THE COOPER SOCIETY

The speaker at the November meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society will be David F. De Sante, Ph.D., Land Bird Biologist at Point Reyes Bird Observatory. His topic: A Reproductive Failure in Coastal California Landbirds in 1986.

The meeting will be at UC Berkeley, Life Sciences Bldg., Room 2503, Monday, Nov. 3 at 8 p.m. preceded by a business session at 7:45. Everyone interested in birds is invited.

## GIFTS and BEQUESTS

### FOR GGAS

#### In Honor of

Elsie Roemer's Birthday, Nov. 18

#### In Honor of Their Anniversary

Barbara & Robert Mendle

#### In Memory of

Elaine Vincent's Father

#### Gift of

Nancy T. Conzett

Edith & Myron Arrick

Pauline Chand

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

## — SECOND CLASS MATTER



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THE GULL

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#### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) (415) 528-0288

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly: Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,  
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.